THE PUNISHER®

RETURNS

STARRING FRANK CASTLE

MARVEL

EDMONDSON
GERADS

012

FRANK CASTLE was once a decorated Marine officer, an upstanding citizen and family man. Then his family was violently taken from him when they were accidentally killed in a mob hit. From that day on, Frank Castle shed his old identity and became a force of cold, calculated retribution and vigilantism known as

THE PUNISHER

PREVIOUSLY

When the new Howling Commandos attempted to take out the Punisher in an ambush, Frank managed to escape with a bullet wound to the torso. A trip south of the border led to capture by a Central American drug lord, being sold into the custody of Crossbones, and a mission with the Black Widow that involved a stint in a Costa Rican prison. Having completed his mission, Frank called his former associate, Rachel Cole-Alves, to bring him back to Los Angeles.

In the Punisher's absence the gangs have risen, led by the second Del Sol brother, plunging L.A. into chaos. Officer Stone was suspended from duty after shooting a perp in the back. She returned to the streets to get vengeance for the beating of Lou, the owner of the Nickel Diner, but was caught in the act and arrested. The Howling Commandos, in an attempt to lure out Frank, kidnapped the family of his remaining relative.

BACK IN TOWN

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LATE. *AGAIN.* HE DOES KNOW TRANG IS MAKING THE SEQUEL, RIGHT?

DOES MIKE THINK THIS MOVIE IS ALL ABOUT JOHNNY? I MEAN...

GIVE HIM A MINUTE. TRAFFIC WAS UNREAL ON SUNSET--

HE LIVES FIVE MINUTES AWAY! I CAME ALL THE WAY FROM VAN N--

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?! WHAT'S GOING ON?!

WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HE--

6NUM126
OH, NO.

AS OF TONIGHT, LOS ANGELES BELONGS TO THE DOS SOLES.

OUR GOAL IS SIMPLE: TO JOIN THE GANGS OF THE UNITED STATES UNDER ONE BANNER. LET LOS ANGELES SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE: WE NUMBER IN THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS, AND WE CAN EACH OF US LAY A BOMB IN A POLICE STATION!

THE CITIES, ONE BY ONE, WILL BE OURS. THE HEROES CANNOT FIGHT US ALL. MOB RULE REIGNS NOW...

This is the Place

SEÑOR DEL SOL, YOU'RE ASKING FOR MADNESS-- FORGIVE ME, BUT HOW WILL DOS SOLES RISE IF--

YOU SMALL-MINDED FOOL.

I HAVE MY ORDERS. JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE.

SO. WE DO WHAT WE'RE ASKED. WE DESTROY L.A.

THEN WE HAVE OUR POWER.

WHO *ARE* YOU? WHAT ARE YOU--

HEY, SERGEANT TUGGS.

LET'S LEAVE OUR SIDEARMS OUT OF THIS.

DON'T WORRY. I AIN'T HERE TO HURT YOU. JUST WANTED YOU TO PASS ALONG A MESSAGE.

TO YOUR PAL FRANK.

I DON'T KNOW WHERE FRANK IS...

TELL HIM HE STILL HAS SOME FAMILY LEFT.

TELL HIM THEY'RE WITH US.

HEYA POOCH.

SHOULDN'T BE LIKE THIS, RACHEL. I BEAT DEL SOL.

FROM WHAT I HEAR, HIS BROTHER IS IN TOWN NOW. THE POLICE ARE WEAKENED, AND WITH YOU GONE...

THE CRIMINALS AREN'T AFRAID OF ANYTHING.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

I'LL DEAL WITH IT.

AND TO DO SO I'M GOING TO NEED A HELLUVA LOT OF GUNS.

SO HOW ABOUT TAKING ME TO ONE MORE PLACE?

WHO KNOWS WHAT THEY'LL DO? WE NEED EXTRA PROTECTION.

THE WARDEN'S WAITING TO HEAR FROM THE MAYOR, I THINK.

CALLED MY WIFE. TOLD HER TO GO STAY WITH HER MOM IN RIVERSIDE UNTIL THIS NONSENSE IS OVER.

WE GOT A FEW DOS SOLES IN HERE, YOU KNOW.

WE SHOULD BREAK THEM UP BEFORE THEY GET ANY IDEAS.

WE'RE GONNA HAVE OUR HANDS FULL WITH THIS LAST ONE.

SO. YOU'RE THE COP.

WELCOME TO HELL, PIG.

AND FOOD. WE'LL NEED FOOD FOR YOU, TOO.

CAN'T FORGET THAT.

OF COURSE, NOT SURE WHERE YOU'LL STAY. WHEN MY MOM'S BOXER GETS ONE SNIFF OF YOU THAT THING WILL BE--

HOLY COYOTE. FRANK.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD.

GOT TWO CONTINENTS TRYING TO MAKE ME THAT WAY.

HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

A FRIEND BROUGHT ME BACK FROM DOWN SOUTH.

I WASN'T AWARE YOU *HAD* ANY FRIENDS. ASIDE FROM ME AND LOOT.

SO WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

OUT OF TOWN FOR A WHILE. THINGS ARE HEATING UP. I'VE GOT A MOM TO TAKE CARE OF IN PASADENA.

I NEED SOMETHING BEFORE YOU GO. A BUNCH OF SOMETHINGS.

OKAY, FRANK, BUT... THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO SHOW YOU.

FAMILY?

THE ONLY ONES I HAVE LEFT. THE WIFE IS A CASTIGLIONE.

THEY CLAIM TO BE AT THE RITZ CARLTON.

THEY WANT TO LURE ME OUT. BAIT I CAN'T REFUSE...

MEANWHILE, THIS CITY NEEDS PUNISHMENT.

I'M NOT GOING AFTER MY FAMILY. I'M NOT PLAYING THIS GAME.

THEN WHAT?

WHOEVER THEY ARE, THEY AREN'T AFRAID OF ME. I CAN USE THAT...

CAN YOU GET ME WHAT I NEED? I HAVE NOTHING LEFT HERE.

I CAN BY TONIGHT.

BY TOMORROW MORNING A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE DEAD, TUGGS.

HELP ME MAKE SURE IT'S MOSTLY THE RIGHT ONES.

THREE HOURS LATER.

GOT THE SUPPLIES DUFFLED IN THE BACK.

I THINK WE'LL HAVE BETTER LUCK WITH SURFACE STREETS.

THE CITY'S A POWDER KEG.

THE HAVE-NOTS THINK THEIR TIME HAS COME.

SOMEHOW, THIS HAS BECOME MY DUTY.

THIS CITY.

ANY CITY.

SOMEHOW, WHAT WAS ONCE REVENGE--SIMPLE, BLACK AND WHITE, BLOODY REVENGE--

--IS NOW THE ONLY PURPOSE I HAVE.

THE HOTEL IS ON OLYMPIC, SO I'M GOING TO CUT SOUTH TO--

NO. STOP.

WHICH MEANS I MAKE FAR FEWER DECISIONS THAN I USED TO.

I'M NOT LEAVING THEM FOR SOMEONE ELSE.

HEY, SPARKLES.

THAT LOOKS DANGEROUS.

SORRY, OLD MAN, THE STREETS BELONG TO--

THAT'S THE THING ABOUT PURPOSE:

YOU TAKE WHAT IT PUTS IN YOUR PATH.

I'M GOING TO NEED SOME WHITE PAINT BEFORE YOU DROP ME OFF.

OOOOOKAY. I THINK MAYBE THERE'S A CVS ON THE WAY. THEY PROBABLY HAVE SOME CRAFT PAINT, OR CHILDREN'S ART SUPPLIES...

WHATEVER WORKS.

KEEP AN EYE ON LOOT, BUT GET OUT OF TOWN.

THINGS ARE GOING TO GET PRETTY NASTY SOON.

DON'T WHINE, LOOT.

YOU'RE DEFINITELY SAFER WITH ME.

WE'RE NOT RECEIVING ANY GUESTS TONIGHT, SIR--THERE'S A MILITARY OPERATION HERE WITH THE RIOTS--

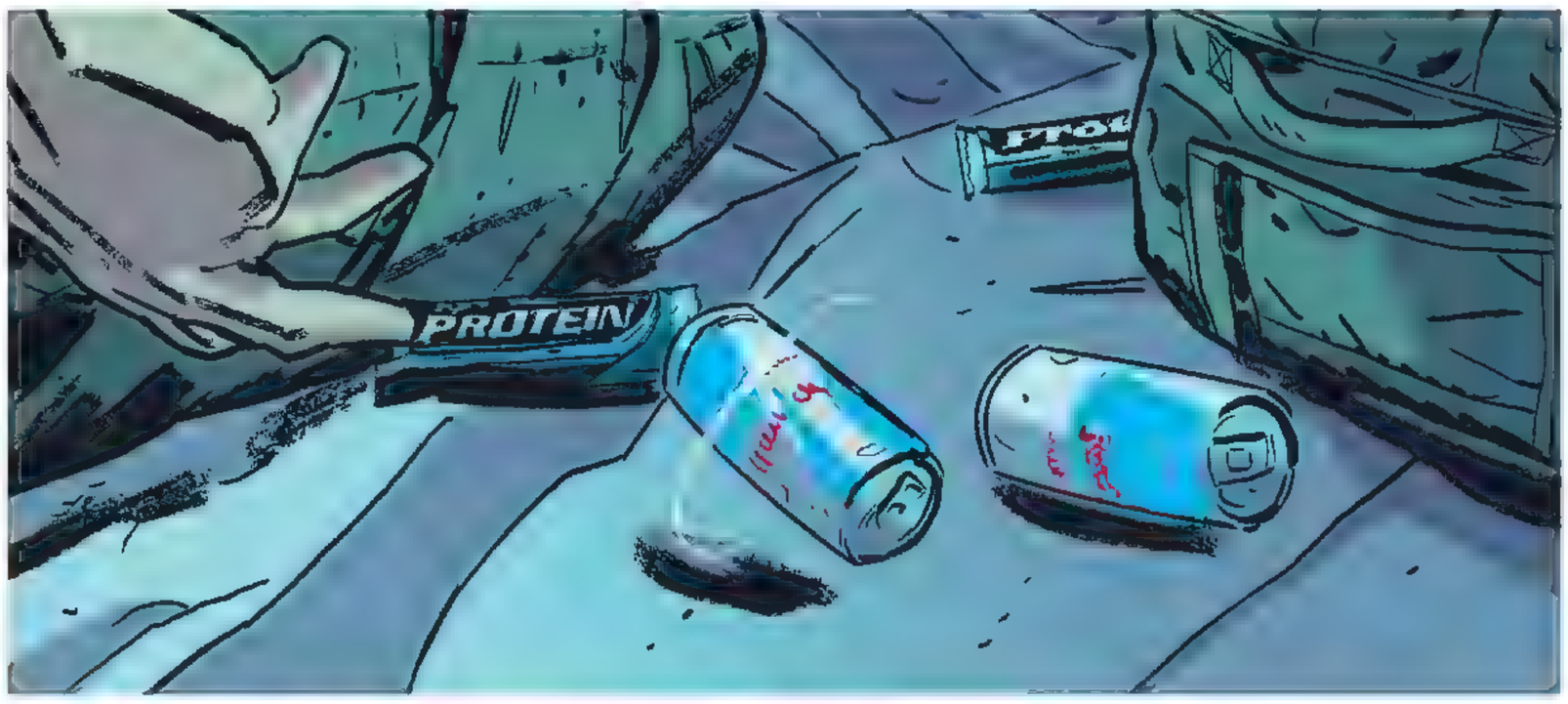
THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE FOR. NOW CLEAR YOUR STAFF OUT A.S.A.P.

ALL OF THEM.

"...SO, FRANK, I WASN'T SURE WHAT ALL YOU'D NEED, SO I FILLED THE BAGS WITH A WIDE RANGE...

"SOME OF IT WASN'T EASY TO GRAB.

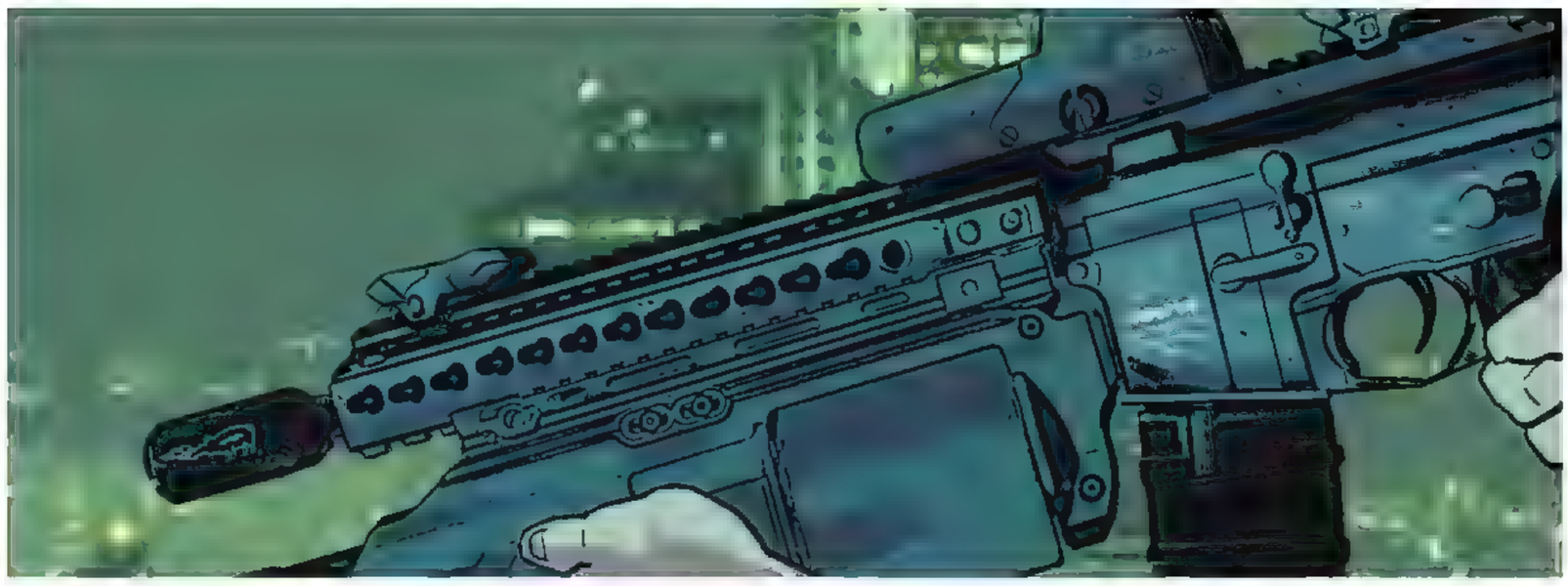
"FIRST, SOME PROTEIN BARS, AN' A COUPLE OF ENERGY DRINKS.



"SOME CRYE BLACK MULTICAM BASICS. SO YOU AT LEAST LOOK THE PART...

"YOUR CRYE HITCOAT ARMOR...

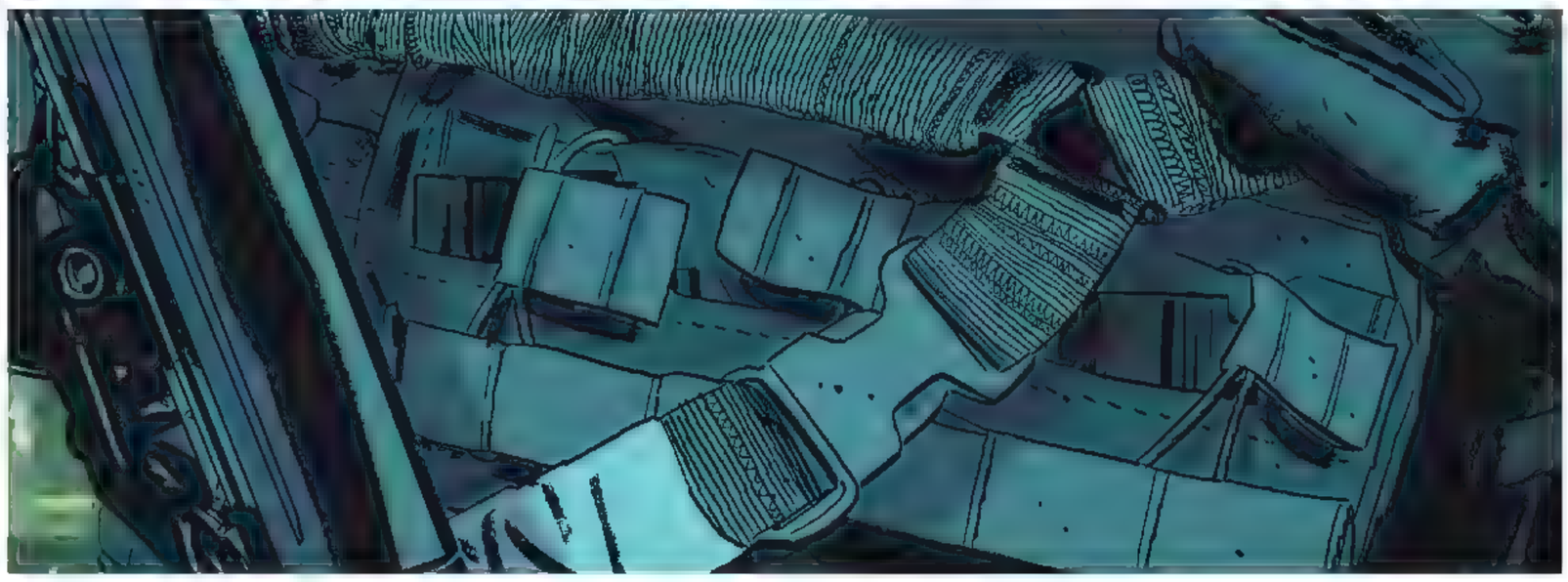
"THE CRYE SIX12 MODULAR BREACHING SHOTGUN...

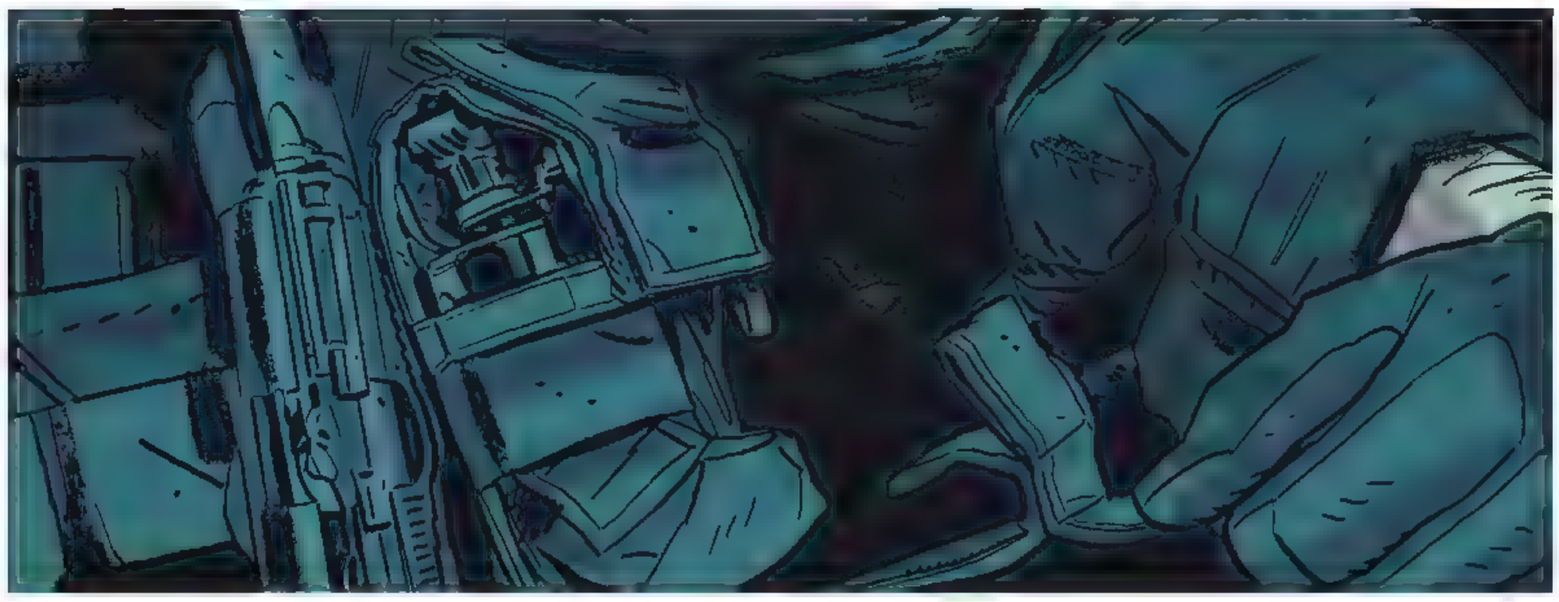


"A PAIR OF CASPIAN 1911S. MACHINED TO YOUR PREFERENCES...

"...YEAH, I ALWAYS KEEP EXTRAS HANDY.

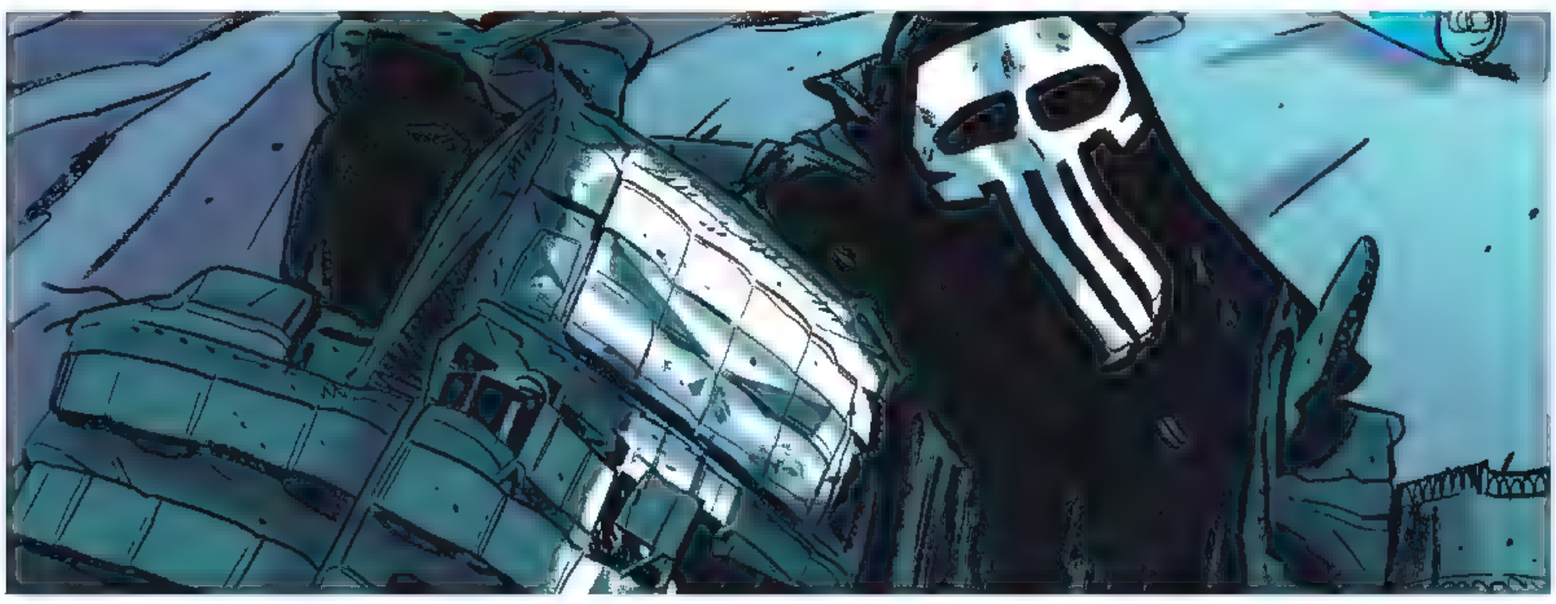
"ITC HANDS-FREE RIFLE HARNESS, FOR QUICK SWITCHING...





"FLASHBANGS, T-BOMBS...

"A NEW WATCH, HAGAR THIS TIME. AUTOMATIC TO HELP WITH ELECTROS AND SUCH. IT WILL CLASS YOU UP A BIT...



"AND YOUR BUSINESS CARDS...SO TO SPEAK...

"PLUS A FEW OTHER ODDS AND ENDS."

WE HAVE TO ACCEPT THE POSSIBILITY THAT FRANK CASTLE IS DEAD.

AND IF HE NEVER SHOWS UP, SIDEWINDER?

CASTLE WON'T DIE THAT EASY, RUBY RED.

HE'LL GET THE NOTE. HE'LL CALL.

WELL, TELL HIM TO HURRY ALREADY. I'M CRAVING SOME MARGARITAS. AND I DON'T MEAN MEXICALI STUFF. RIGHT, MYERS?

KEEP YOUR MARGARITA. I WANT TO ACTUALLY WATCH FOOTBALL FOR ONCE. REMEMBER FOOTBALL? I THINK IT'S EVEN IN SEASON.

WE NEED TO BE READY TO MOVE THEM IF HE DOES CALL.

YES, SERGEANT.

MYERS, WE CAN'T SLIP. I NEED YOU FROSTY, WITH EYES ON.

OF COURSE, TORCHIA. WHY YOU SO NERVOUS ABOUT THIS? SKULLGUY GOT YOU SPOOKED?

I'M JUST NOT SURE ABOUT THIS ONE...

YOU THINK WE'RE GOING TO WAR WITH THE WRONG ENEMY, SIDEWINDER?

I THINK WE HAVE A MISSION, RUBY RED.

WE'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT TOGETHER, I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER FELT WE WERE ***DESPERATE.*** NOT UNTIL NOW.

AND I DON'T THINK IT'S BECAUSE WE'RE NOT GOOD AT OUR JOB...

THE INTEL ON THIS ONE FEELS A BIT LIKE CEBU, SIDEWINDER. THAT'S ALL I'M SAYING.

WE'RE THE HOWLING COMMANDOS. NOT VIGILANTES.

"KEEP THAT DISTINCTION IN FRONT OF YOU. GOT IT?"

YOU DIDN'T GET THE MEMO? EVERYONE OUT. ***NOW.***

DANGER
ELECTRICAL ROOM
UNAUTHORIZED PERSONNEL KEEP OUT

UH, GUYS, WE JUST LOST POWER HERE...
NOT THE WHOLE BUILDING...

THERE ARE A LOT OF EYES OVER THIS WAY...

L.A. IS A STRAY COYOTE.

ALL IT WANTS IS TO BITE MY HAND OFF.

BUT I'VE HELD IT LIKE A MUZZLE. LOOKED INTO ITS EYES.

AND MADE IT MY BITCH.

IT'S TIME TO MAKE L.A. DO WHAT I WANT IT TO.